



Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan Review  
Public Scoping Meeting Comments

Sept. 29, 2008

6 – 9 p.m.

Peninsula College Longhouse, Port Angeles, WA

In all, 33 people participated in the meeting, excluding sanctuary staff. Meeting attendees were divided into four discussion groups. Each group was facilitated by a sanctuary staff member. An additional staff member served as note-taker. Discussion groups sat around tables facing projected Microsoft Word blank document pages. Facilitators each asked their groups, “what should be Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary’s priorities for the next 5 to 10 years? Note-takers typed each group member’s comments so that the entire group could see them. Facilitators checked in with each participant to verify that his/her typed comments were accurate; the participants could then request changes to the wording. Here are the responses from each of the four groups.

**Group #1**

Facilitator: Bob Steelquist

Note-taker: Jacqueline Laverdure

- Ocean literacy- Build the future generation of protectors and stewards of our ocean.
- Focus on research – What’s been done, how it serves us, and where is it going? Build collaboration with other agencies.
- Develop meaningful and long-term relationships with the communities around the sanctuary.
- Increase public education. What is it, why do we need it, what have we done thus far, how can people get involved, where do we want to be in five years? Ask person on street; most will not know what the sanctuary is.
- Sanctuary-wide assessment and analysis of key topics, oceanography, biological function, fisheries function, economies and values. What is the most important and why? Process should be inclusive of all governments and interests. Multiple minds to get common idea.
- Improve marine vessel safety beyond Neah Bay tug.
- Invasive species
- Marine bird assessment and why in decline.
- Close and remediate solid waste dumpsites along shoreline (action item). Runoff, water quality (underlying priorities).
- Habitat mapping, developing response plan, continue and accelerate work

- Increase public ocean literacy programs for community and K-12 (action item). Help people to be stewards of the ecosystem (underlying priority).
- Water's value and the connectedness to the ocean, one ocean that connects all of us.
- Invasive species – what comes out of ballast water? Research project on ships. How dynamic the ocean is. It is a big mystery. What is coming over?
- Develop a gap analysis about marine resources what we know and what we don't know. To inform management decisions. Example: Increases information for oil spills. Base line data.
- Research and the potential uses of ocean for energy. Wave energy, other potential alternatives - plusses and minuses of each. Issue – the implications of developing alternative energy compatibility.
- Local community relationship building. Expectations of what the sanctuary was going to do. Place-oriented that is unique and provides excellent resource for what the sanctuary does. Communication, knowledge base, problem-solving that has support and action of local residents.
- Research and monitor the deposition of airborne pollutants from Asia and marine vessel traffic.
- Resource management needs to identify resources at risk and address potential impacts of climate change.
- Protection of the pristine; keep the diversity and purity of all creatures - from plankton to the top of the food chain. Help the ocean survive.
- Encourage the development of an outer coast atlas. Oceanographic currents, biotic resources, habitat mapping, monitoring, near shore cell circulation patterns
- Develop basic knowledge. Better understand basic mechanics of process.
- Cannot manage something that we do not know.
- Maintain the ban on offshore drilling.
- Build better partnership with Olympic Coast Intergovernmental Policy Council to facilitate inventory and issues identification and to better access adequate resources for implementation phase. What issues are realistic for us to pursue.
- Coordination with Canadians with marine vessel safety, vessel sewage, ballast water, air deposition. Both coordination with activities, and costs to do that.
- Address cruise ships, Victoria about discharge and water quality issues.
- Develop collaborative research to investigate seabirds as indicator species and indicator of ocean health. Need to better understand seabirds. Great indicator of trophic levels.
- Honoring and learning the heritage of the people who have lived with the ocean for thousands of years. Traditional ecological knowledge – ways of knowing.
- System-wide – Develop better coordination and appreciation with Sanctuary family and Fisheries family. Fishing is not necessarily bad. Tribal fisheries are doing well. There is a great wealth that comes from the ocean. That is the tribe's existence. Incorporating this traditional knowledge is vehicle for getting to this cooperation issue.
- Develop and adhere to a standard to making existing data translatable and available in a reasonable time period to inform resource management.
- Investigate the effects of the proposed expansions and the future expansions of the navy testing range both in geography and the activities being proposed.
- Invasive species – Are there any thoughts of a response plan for invasive species?
- Adaptive management to change policy and management practices.

## Group #2

Facilitator: Andy Palmer

Note-taker: Helene Scalliet

- Rockfish assessment research should be expanded to areas that current methods have not captured (randomized transects within variable bottom contours)
  - Current methods are unable to access certain areas that some species tend to prefer or require
- Federal jurisdiction over a large area has taken community and state processes out of the loop
  - The sanctuary should work to overcome this disconnect and partner with the state right now in the Outer Coast Marine Resources Committee process
- Oceanographic long-term monitoring should be undertaken to document what is happening with climate change (chemistry, water temperature, etc). Short-term monitoring is not enough.
- Education/outreach is key and should be done with existing entities to expand the current outreach capacity.
  - Outreach should be expanded from children to more adult communities.
  - Should create an opportunity for weekend city dwellers to interact more with local residents.
- The sanctuary should set up a monitoring program to help with oil spill prevention that would monitor larval stages of rockfish and other groundfish species. To date, there is mainly risk assessment info on near shore species but no or little monitoring to assess damage to groundfish species, migratory species, recruitment, etc. Monitoring should be seasonal or even monthly.
- The sanctuary should increase research efforts and investigation on the marine survivability of all salmonid species in the ocean environment, with an emphasis on coastal species and/or ESA-listed species.
- The sanctuary should undertake genetic studies of salmonids passing through the sanctuary. There are species from other places (Columbia River basin, etc) that pass through the sanctuary and the sanctuary should study this occurrence.
  - Sanctuary may be critical habitat for certain species passing through, but we don't know that because we don't have the information.
- Sanctuary should expand monitoring and characterization of all habitats within the sanctuary. We need to understand the habitat needs of all lifecycle stages.
- Sanctuary should undertake more coral biomass research – not just taking pictures of the resources but estimating the biomass of the coral resources, for example in areas not accessible to fishing gear as well as fished areas.
- The management plan should take a balanced approach to address tribal concerns but not to the detriment of all other communities.
- The sanctuary should support the installation of passive acoustic monitoring of killer whales or other marine mammals, similar to what has been done in Neah Bay.
- The sanctuary should take the lead in research on harnessing energy from the ocean.
  - Ocean energy should be appropriate for the area and the sanctuary should help guiding this issue.

- Sanctuary should do more in-depth monitoring of the non-native otter population effect on the resident urchin population
  - Current urchin population may not be able to recover due to recent predation by otter population. Need to investigate and assess this issue.
- In the new management plan, the regulation of fisheries should not be authorized. Continue the same management plan action as the one in 1994 with regards to fishing.
- Cruise ships and incoming shipping traffic should not be allowed to dump bilge and garbage in the sanctuary, and this should be enforced by the coast guard. Monitoring instances of such dumping would be helpful in enforcing the regulations.
- Sanctuary should monitor long-term higher apex predator abundance as bio-indicator of ecosystem health (at least 5 years, but ideally 20 yrs).
- The Advisory Council should interact better with its representative groups. The Advisory Council should be able to report on what its representative groups are concerned about.
- The Navy should not be doing target practice in the sanctuary because it has impacts on birds and marine mammals.
- Sanctuary should expand random transect video monitoring rather than site-specific video monitoring, in order to have a more representative picture of habitat, species composition, abundance, etc...
- The sanctuary should show that education efforts have had impacts on people's knowledge of the sanctuary. We need to define the metrics/benchmark/performance measures in order to measure effectiveness of education program.

### **Group #3**

Facilitator: Liam Antrim

Note-taker: John Barimo

- Understanding ecosystems dynamics. Refine a program to focus on physical parameters and biological populations in the near shore areas. Concerns with anoxia, upwelling and plankton-food web connections. Natural disturbance or influenced by anthropogenic influences such as meteorological conditions or climatic conditions. Concerns with effects on fisheries and seabird populations.
- Low oxygen problem. Need continued focus, improved understanding of oceanographic and climate change linkages.
- Ecosystem protection in and of itself as a priority in terms of sanctuary management. Should be underlined concept in research, education and all activities of the sanctuary.
- Sanctuary needs to commit itself to long-term monitoring of important parts of the food web. Should conduct review of protocols that can be conducted year after year so that these programs continue.
- Synthesizing and integrating data from fish and wildlife, tribes and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The sanctuary or someone needs to be the integrator.
- Education. The local population needs to know more about the sanctuary and its function. Foster stewardship. Interpretive signage to help educate populous. Education programs with local communities.
- Disappointing at this is the first newsletter from the sanctuary since it was designated. Should have had (or have) better flow of information. Many web-based opportunities. Sanctuary appears to be a stealth operation. Need to let public know the resource exists, what the sanctuary is doing. Present early results. What are the trends, baselines, etc? Must be communicated.

- Consistency between west coast sanctuaries with management of cruise ship discharges which may influence water quality.
- There has never been a successful no-notice equipment oil spill exercise. They should be conducted regularly.
- Problem with the effectiveness of existing management plan of the sanctuary with protecting natural resources, such as the use of bottom contact gear and the effects on corals or wave energy with impact to marine mammals with noise, movement, entanglement. How does the management plan protect the sanctuary from the expansion of U.S. Navy activities?
- Coordination with other agencies to get a better understanding of roles and responsibilities. Comprehensive understanding of research trends. Analysis of trends that have changed since the sanctuary designation. What improvements have occurred since designation?
- Analysis of fisheries impacts or levels of impacts, what impacts have been sustained.
- Need a baseline for future monitoring. Sanctuary to help facilitate with agencies, academic, tribes and act as a clearing house. Coordinate a bi-annual symposium of knowledge of the sanctuaries, i.e., recent research results.
- There need to be regionally-based assessments of rockfish and not a coast-wide management.
- Understanding of keystone species and interspecies dynamics in the ecosystem
- Species research that captures trends and status of different types in the sanctuary. Research should focus on habitat conditions and habitat types, i.e., deep corals.
- Ecosystem research objectives and data collected should be coordinated with other federal and state agencies such as Olympic National Park and the tribes.
- Stop U.S. Navy exclusion of bathymetric data and the sharing of that data, also the restriction of civilian collection of bathymetric data.
- Reaffirm sanctuary support for the Neah Bay rescue tug. No official sanctuary statement. There is a proven value of the tug to prevent oil spills
- We need to better define the winter distribution of southern killer whales. Acoustic instrumentation on the coast to track the movements needed.
- Sanctuary needs to be doing more mapping of the seafloor habitat.
- To better understand the usage by gray whales of feeding areas. Improved characterization of mother-calf pairs during northern migrations.
- Continued exploration of different habitats
- Understand impacts of climate change
- Recognizing potential for wave and/or energy, and other development. Does it make sense in the sanctuary? Programmatic EIS for wave energy
- Marine debris understanding of sources onshore vs. offshore. Source control. Identification of debris source for improved management strategies.
- The sanctuary needs to replace the RV Tatoosh with a better small research platform. Bigger, more deck space, flying bridge, newer instrumentation. More use for education trips into the sanctuary.
- Update ESIs (Environmental Sensitivity Index) for coast shoreline
- Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) near shore species characterization.
- When to use oil dispersant use matrix for responsible dispersant use

#### **Group #4**

Facilitator: Matt Brookhart

Note-taker: Lauren Bennett

- Research: there were a lot of question marks in the sanctuary's 2008 Condition Report. It would be a good thing to try and answer those questions/unknowns identified in the Condition Report. In particular, research is needed on the deep-sea trenches. Additional research is needed on the base of the food chain (krill etc.) – especially in light of anticipated effects of climate change.
- The protection of newly found deep-sea coral is very important. The coral needs to be identified and protected. We also need to increase the area of sanctuary that is mapped, so that we know what we've got. There needs to be stewardship among all the users.
- I'd like to see the sanctuary do its own independent research (instead of just piggy-backing on other programs). The only independent work seems to be on deep-sea coral.
- The sanctuary needs to be more transparent about its goals. It is hard to get information from the sanctuary (in regards to data and decision-making). The sanctuary needs to be more transparent about how decisions are made.
- The sanctuary needs to create a better working relationship with the tribes. The tribes have been stewards of the resources for 1000s of years.
- The sanctuary needs to do more research to back up its belief system/objective/mission.
- The sanctuary needs to involve tribes in research/planning/surveys early on and throughout the entire process.
- The sanctuary needs to find a way to fund "spiders" on existing buoys that monitor ocean acidification. The degree of ocean acidification is extremely important to monitor.
- The sanctuary needs additional near shore monitoring buoys. That way, the sanctuary can get a bigger data set with which to assess ocean conditions.
- What are going to be the cumulative effects of wave energy buoys? How will these buoys affect what lives in the sanctuary?
- It's important for the sanctuary to increase interactions with other users. Staff should be out on the coast closer to the sanctuary.
- The sanctuary needs to improve signage at highway pull-outs. There needs to be more interpretive signage. The sanctuary needs to better inform people as they drive on the coast that they are looking out on a marine sanctuary. There needs to be more signage for travelers on 101.
- The sanctuary needs an on-line database where the public can access data and information. This would better educate people about what the sanctuary is doing. It is difficult to access sanctuary data. If data was accessible on-line, it would lead to more transparency.
- The sanctuary should be more forthcoming with data.
- The sanctuary needs genuinely to open the lines of communication with industries (tribal and non-tribal, fishing, shipping, wave energy companies, etc.), and work with the fishing industry on a continuous basis to resolve problems.
- The sanctuary should explore opportunities to work across the international border with Canada. We should look more at working with them on research and protection. The sanctuary should look at improving regional approaches to management.
- The Olympic Coast Discovery Center (OCDC) has stagnated. The OCDC needs to be updated and needs to evolve continually. Volunteers have been saying the same messages over and over for years. The center needs to change messages more frequently. The OCDC needs to be more dynamic. There needs to be more signage for the OCDC. So many people pass by and don't know that they went through a marine sanctuary.

- The sanctuary should assist/support fisheries managers by doing research that helps managers (rather than managing fisheries itself). For example, seafloor mapping research could help fisheries managers.
- The sanctuary should do more to utilize new technology on the internet to improve its website. There could be more interactive aspects of the website. This is something that should be implemented across the sanctuary program. The purpose/goal of this would be to improve education and outreach.
- The sanctuary needs to research the impacts of overabundance of marine mammals. What are the impacts on shellfish populations? What are the impacts on salmonids? What are the ecosystem-wide impacts on ecosystem structure and function?
- The sanctuary needs to increase the power of the Intergovernmental Policy Council (IPC) so that it has a greater voice as co-managers of resources within the sanctuary. The IPC has a co-management role. Right now, the IPC doesn't have enough of a role.
- Once there are significantly more meetings between the IPC voting members and the sanctuary, the groups can develop more mutual respect and function better as partners. The IPC and sanctuary can then develop a history and a trust relationship.
- The sanctuary needs proactively to identify barriers and explore opportunities to improve government to government relations, possibly using a third party.
- The sanctuary needs to identify and map cultural/archeological sites, specifically shipwrecks. It is important to preserve the cultural and historical aspects of the sanctuary.
- Marine debris (and specifically marine plastics) needs to see more emphasis. Perhaps there should be more focus on prevention of marine debris.
- The sanctuary should research how global warming will affect resources in the sanctuary.
- The sanctuary needs to be forward-looking (instead of looking back).
- The sanctuary needs to work to heal wounds that occurred in the past.
- There needs to be more mutual respect between the sanctuary and the IPC.
- The sanctuary needs to make the public more aware of the IPC and their roles.
- I am really opposed to whaling in the sanctuary. It is contrary to the sanctuary's mandates. The sanctuary needs to protect marine mammals.
- The sanctuary needs to recognize all treaty rights (whaling, fishing, hunting, etc.), and recognize that its mandates to protect resources do not supersede treaty rights.
- Take has always been contemplated statutorily within national marine sanctuaries. The sanctuary is not a reserve; it is not a national park.
- There needs to be hypothesis-based research done by the sanctuary.